

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OES-05 EB-07 COME-00 INT-05 AID-05

FEA-01 TRSE-00 ACDA-10 ERDA-07 NRC-07 CIAE-00 INR-07

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R 081330Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0870

UNCLAS JIDDA 2541

E.O.: 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, SA

SUBJ: DESALINATION OVERVIEW

REF : A. STATE 15747; B. JIDDA 1689; C. JIDDA 2306

1. RECENT CONVERSATION WITH SENIRO DESALINATION AFFAIRS OFFICER YUSUF AL-AKEEL REVEALED THAT THE DESALINATION AFFAIRS OFFICE UNDER PRINCE MOHAMMAD BIN FAYSAL BIN ABD AL-AZIZ IS CURRENTLY PLANNING BUILD UP SAUDI DESALINATION CAPACITY TO THE RANGE OF 350 TO 400 MILLION GALLONS PER DAY WITH 4000 MEGAWATTS OF ELECTRICITY PRODUCED IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE DESALINATION PROCESS. PRESENT OUTPUT IS 13 MILLION GALLONS PER DAY. THE PLANTS IN JIDDA AND AL-KHOBAR PRODUCE 5 MILLION AND 7 MILLION RESPECTIVELY WITH THREE SMALLER PLANTS CONTRIBUTING 120 THOUSAND GALLONS EACH. A 10 MILLION GALLON/100 MEGAWATT EXPANSION OF THE JIDDA PLANT IS IN THE CONTRACT NEGOTIATION PHASE. (SEE JIDDA 2306). AUGUST 75 IS PREDICTED AS THE DATE FOR THE GROUND-BREAKING OF THIS PHASE.

COMMENT: THE JIDDA DESALINATION PLANT IS CAPABLE OF PRODUCING 5 MILLION GALLONS PER DAY, BUT IT IS PRESENTLY RESTRICTED TO AN OUTPUT OF 2.5 MILLION. AN INSURANCE COUPLED WITH A SCHEDULED GENERAL MAINTENANCE PROGRAM ARE THE CAUSES OF THE LOWER OUTPUT (WHICH IS CONTRIBUTING

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TO THE PRESENT GROWING WATER SHORTAGE IN JIDDA).

2. YUSUF AL-AKEEL STATED THAT THE DESALINATION AFFAIRS IS WILLING TO DISCUSS A CONSORTIUM APPROACH TO THE PROBLEMS OF POWER AND WATER PRODUCTION. HE SUGGESTED THAT POWER COMPANIES EXPERIENCED IN THE UTILIZATION OF STEAM TURBINES AND ORGANIZATIONS POSSESSING KNOWLEDGE OF THE DESALINATION PROCESS MIGHT JOIN FORCES IN ORDER TO SATISFY SPECIFICATIONS OF THE SAG. IDEALLY SAG WOULD LIKE TO RESERVE THE TOTAL RESOURCES OF INTERESTED AMERICAN COMPANIES FOR AT LEAST FIVE YEARS. AL-AKEEL ADDED THAT THE TIME FACTOR IS BECOMING MORE IMPORTANT IN SAG'S SEARCH FOR ORGANIZATIONS CAPABLE OF ACCOMPLISHING THE GOALS OF THE SAUDI DESALINATION AFFAIRS. HE CONJECTURED THAT SAG MAY FIND IT NECESSARY TO STOCK PILE CRITICAL DESALINATION PLANT MATERIALS (E.G., COPPER) FOR USE OF COMPANIES AND AS HEDGE AGAINST INFLATION.

3. SEVERAL COMPANIES FROM JAPAN, GERMANY, BRITAIN, AND FRANCE HAVE MADE OVERTURES TO SWDA SUGGESTING THAT THEY ARE PREPARED TO COOPERATE IN MULTINATIONAL CONSORTIUMS IN ORDER TO SUPPLY THE EXPERTISE BEING SOUGHT BY THE SAG.  
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